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Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Rights of the child

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.22/Rev.1

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

I. Introduction

1. At its 44th meeting, held on 18 November 2005, the Third Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.22/Rev.1. A statement of programme budget implications was before the Committee in document A/C.3/60/L.66.

II. Requests contained in the draft resolution

2. By operative paragraphs 35 and 43 (b) of draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.22/Rev.1, the General Assembly would:

(a) Recommend that the Secretary-General extend the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict for a further period of three years;

(b) Request the Special Representative to continue to submit reports to the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights.

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III. Background

3. In its resolution 51/77 of 12 December 1996, the General Assembly recommended that the Secretary-General appoint for a period of three years a Special Representative on the impact of armed conflict on children. The Assembly also called upon States and institutions concerned to provide voluntary contributions in support of the work of the Special Representative. The Secretary-General appointed the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict in September 1997. The scope of responsibilities of the Special Representative was described in documents A/51/306 and Add.1.

4. On 6 January 1998, the Secretary-General established the Trust Fund for Children and Armed Conflict. As start-up contributions to the Trust Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees provided $100,000 and $50,000, respectively. During the course of its initial three-year period, the Office of the Special Representative was financed by voluntary contributions.

5. In paragraph 37 of its resolution 51/77, the General Assembly requested the Special Representative to submit to the Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights an annual report containing relevant information on the situation of children affected by armed conflict, bearing in mind existing mandates and reports of relevant bodies. Since 1996, in a number of its resolutions, the Assembly has reiterated that request, while welcoming the continuing support for and voluntary contributions to the work of the Special Representative in the fulfilment of his mandate.

6. In its resolutions 54/149 of 17 December 1999 and 57/190 of 18 December 2002, the General Assembly recommended that the Secretary-General extend the mandate of the Special Representative for a further period of three years. In paragraph 3 of resolution 57/190, the Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the scope and effectiveness of the United Nations system response, including recommendations for strengthening, mainstreaming, integrating and sustaining those activities.

7. In its resolution 58/245 of 23 December 2003, the General Assembly decided that the activities under the mandate of the Special Representative would be supported through regular budget funding. Before the adoption of that resolution, the Fifth Committee had decided to inform the Assembly that, should it adopt the resolution, any appropriations necessary would be considered in the context of the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General pursuant to section V of resolution 57/190 (see A/58/652).

8. The report of the Secretary-General on the comprehensive assessment of the United Nations system response to children affected by armed conflict (A/59/331) was issued on 3 September 2004. In that report, the Secretary-General provided, inter alia, recommendations for strengthening the United Nations system response to children affected by armed conflict.

9. In paragraph 51 (c) of its resolution 59/261 of 23 December 2004, the General Assembly decided to request the Special Representative to continue to submit reports to the Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights and to ensure that they contained relevant, accurate and objective information on the situation of

children affected by armed conflict, taking into account the views of Member States and the outcome document adopted by the Assembly at its special session on children and bearing in mind existing mandates and reports of relevant bodies.

10. Before adoption of resolution 59/261, the Fifth Committee decided to inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the resolution, additional requirements totalling $1,622,200 gross would arise under the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005, representing a charge against the contingency fund (see A/59/642). Of that amount, $920,000 gross ($800,000 net) pertained to the provision for maintaining the operations of the Office of the Special Representative in 2005.

IV. Activities by which the proposed requests would be implemented

11. The recommendation to extend the mandate of the Special Representative for a further period of three years and the continuation of reporting to the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of children affected by armed conflict, requested in paragraphs 35 and 43 (b), respectively, of draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.22/Rev.1, would reflect the continuation of the mandate of the Special Representative, described in paragraphs 36 and 37 of resolution 51/77. The extension and reporting requirement would require that necessary support be provided for effective performance of the mandate of the Office. In this regard, necessary resources should be identified in order to further maintain in 2006, 2007 and 2008 the Office of the Special Representative, which has been responsible, inter alia, for the preparation of the reports for the past several years.

V. Administrative and financial arrangements and indication of additional requirements

12. The estimated requirements for the Office of the Special Representative in the biennium 2006-2007 would amount to $3,499,900 gross ($3,042,300 net). In accordance with the streamlined structure specified in the report of the Secretary-General on the comprehensive assessment (A/59/331), the Office would comprise, in addition to the post of the Special Representative (Under-Secretary-General), a staff of four Professionals, including a Senior Adviser (P-5); two Professional staff (P-4) responsible for day-to-day relations with United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations, as well as for assisting in the preparation of reports; one Professional staff member (P-3) responsible for outreach and public information; and three support staff (1 General Service (Principal level) and 2 General Service (Other level)). The cost of these eight temporary posts would amount to $2,318,100 net of staff assessment. The Office of the Special Representative would also be provided with adequate resources to cover field visits and other cooperation and coordination trips, consultancies and other office operations, commensurate with the streamlined structure and functions. The table below provides information on the estimated resource requirements for post and non-post resources (inter alia, consultants and experts, operating expenses, travel).

Resource requirements for 2006-2007 (net)

	United States dollars
Post	2 318 100
Non-post	724 200
Total	**3 042 300**

13. With regard to the Trust Fund established to receive voluntary funds to support the activities of the Office, it is estimated that the balance of unearmarked funds as at 31 December 2005 would amount to $152,100. These unearmarked resources could be used to cover some of the operational requirements of the Office in the biennium 2006-2007.

14. Accordingly, in order to maintain the Office during the biennium 2006-2007, additional provision of $2,890,200 (net) would need to be funded from the regular budget for the biennium 2006-2007. In addition, it is estimated that $457,600 would be required for staff assessment, to be offset by the same amount under income from staff assessment.

15. The resource requirements for the operation of the Office in 2008 would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009.

VI. Potential for absorption in the biennium 2006-2007

16. There are no resources provided under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 that could be made available for the support of the operations of the Office of the Special Representative in the biennium 2006-2007. Any amount that the General Assembly may decide to allocate to support the Office of the Special Representative would need, therefore, to be provided through an additional appropriation for the biennium 2006-2007 in the context of operations of the contingency fund.

VII. Contingency fund

17. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditure derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditure were proposed that exceeded the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned would be implemented only through the redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or the modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities would have to be deferred to a later biennium.

VIII. Summary

18. **Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.22/Rev.1, additional resource requirements of $3,347,800 gross ($2,890,200 net) would arise under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination ($2,890,200), and section 35, Staff assessment ($457,600), to be offset by the same amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007. This would represent a charge against the contingency fund and, as such, would require additional appropriations for the biennium 2006-2007.**